Conjugium Languens:

OR,

The Natural, Civil, and Religious

MISCHIEFS

Ariſing from

Conjugal Infidelity

AND

IMPUNITY.

By CASTAMORE.

Tu quoque ſuſcepti curam dimittis amici;
Officiique pium tam cito ponis onus?

Ov. Triſt.

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Conjugium Languens, &c.

WAS a falſe and groundleſs Character which was given by the great *Scaliger*, of the *Engliſh* Nation, That *they were a People Cruel and Inhoſpitable, perfect Self-Admirers, and Contemners of all the World beſides.* For if we conſider either the Nature of our *Laws*, or the Genius of our *Religion*, which are founded both of them upon the Rules of *Equity* and *Indulgence*, we muſt needs conclude the *Temper* of the *Engliſh* to be a perfect Contradiction to both theſe, if it is not *treatable* and *human*. They may indeed ſometimes be *fierce*, but then 'tis in their own *Defence*: And if they are *inhoſpitable*, 'tis only to ſuch as would make a Prey of their *Civility*. For how many

A Vindication of the Engliſh *Temper and Kindneſs.*

Strangers quit their Native *Soil*, to enjoy the Pleaſure of a more Indulgent *Engliſh Clime*? And *Foreign Merchants* crowd our *Streets* in ſuch Numbers, as if *London* were the *Miſtreſs* and univerſal *Patroneſs* of *Traffck* through the World. But if men approach them in an *hoſtile* way, there is no reaſon they ſhould meet with *Hoſpitality*, or be treated otherwiſe than with a *Martial Engliſh Bravery*, which is highly neceſſary for their own *Defence* and *Preſervation*: For their main *Bulwark* is their Native *Valour*; and their *Men of War*, their only *Alps* and *Pyrenean Hills*. And to ſay that *they are Self-Admirers*, is very weak, ſince if they ſhould not love themſelves, they ought to be *hated* of all the World beſides. I only wiſh their *Conjugal Love* were as ſincere and genuine, as is their *Friendlineſs* to *Strangers*, and as little liable to Exceptions as their *Cruelty*. Then many ſilent *Complaints* againſt *Matrimonial Infidelity* would ceaſe; then would not thoſe Solemn, Sacred *Ties* be ſo wilfully *violated* and *prophan'd*, ſo frequently made an occaſion to *Lewdneſs*, and ſacrific'd ſo impiouſly to all *Immodeſty* and *Luſt*. For how often is *Marriage* made only a Cloak to *Impurity*?

rity? And that dazzling *Beauty* which before commanded *Reſpect* and *Admiration* by its *Innocence*, is under that *Religious Cover* expos'd a *Proſtitute* to every wanton *Eye*. Would but the *Modeſty* of our *Women* keep pace with the *Fortitude* of our *Men*; and the *Baſhfulneſs* and *Purity* of Thoſe, equalize the *Courage* and *Hardineſs* of Theſe, how valuable ſhould we be at *Home*, as well as formidable *Abroad*! Then would it be difficult to determine which of theſe two Qualities would moſt recommend us to the *Eſteem* of the World; whether we ſhould more be fam'd for a Nation of *Lucretia's*, or for a ſtanding Race of *Heroes*.

But the Women will be apt to ſay, That were there no *Attacks*, there would then be no *Victory*: Did not the *Importunities* of the *Men* provoke the *Modeſty* of the *Women*, there would be no *Surrender* of their *Chaſtity*: And how is it poſſible for ſuch a weak *Defence* as Women are qualified to make, to be able to withſtand their repeated *Onſets*? But yet as weak as it is, without *Conſent* the general *Attempts* would be very fruitleſs and unſucceſsful, and no more than the ſtorming a Wall of *Braſs* with *Tennis-Balls*. *Obj.*

Bulls. It is an Obſervation upon this *Iſland*, That no *Continent* has been oftner, perhaps, *conquer'd*, than it has been: And yet the *Hiſtory* takes notice, That it had always a *Hand* in its own *Conqueſts*; and by the means of ſome corrupt *Party* within, was baſely betray'd to its own *Overthrow*. And let the *Women* but guard their *Honour* with inward *Reſolutions*, and not harbour in their Minds a *Treacherous Paſſion* to yield to Amorous *Glances* and *Inſinuations*, and they may ſtill bravely maintain their *Ground*, and fairly defy all *Onſets* and *Surprizals*. But ſince the Weak Sex have render'd themſelves much weaker, by the frequent Conqueſts that are made over them; and the Malignity of their Effeminacy ripens daily towards an Univerſal Contagion, it will be very neceſſary to repreſent the various Miſchiefs of this ſpreading Evil: That the Piety and Wiſdom of the Nation may preſcribe ſuch proper Remedies as may retard at leaſt, if not totally prevent all the Danger of it; and that as well in the Men, who are equally guilty, as in the Female Sex.

Anſw.

In *India* formerly an *Elephant* was eſteem'd and allow'd as a valuable *Gift* to a Married Woman,

Woman, to debaſe her ſelf, and corrupt her *Chaſtity*. And *Solon* is recorded to have been the firſt in *Greece*, who by his Laws permitted Women to *proſtitute* themſelves for *Neceſſities* of Life. 'Twere well that our Women were to be bounded only by theſe *Laws*: We might then expect ſome Abatement of their Impurity, either by the *Rarity* of that *Animal*, or by *confining* that Sin to ſuch only as are in *Want*.

And that we may not by our *Silence* be any longer acceſſary, as it were, to this odious *Vice*, which is now grown ſo univerſal, let us conſider a-while thoſe various fatal *Miſchiefs* which attend it. And thoſe are,

Firſt, Such as are the *Natural* Conſequences and Effects of it; ſome of which have ſo near an Affinity to *Corruption*, that they foreſtall a *Natural Diſſolution*, and prevent the *Rottenneſs* of the *Grave*: And render the Perſon that is diſtemper'd ſo very *loathſome* and *offenſive*, that as they were formerly too *familiar* with *others*, ſo they are ſcarce able now to *converſe* with *themſelves*: They look as if they were ſpawn'd from the *Dead-Sea*, or were a Limb of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. So long has *Reaſon* lain

Luſt diſeaſes the Body.

lain asleep, and *Conscience* been check'd and aw'd to *Silence*, that the very *Body* now is forc'd to serve as a *Monitor* to the *Soul*, to supply its place, and take its turn to conduct the Mind to *Reformation*, and to endure several *Corporeal Pangs* and *Throws*, for Neglect of *Anguish* and *Remorse* of *Spirit*. But this nauseous *Evil* does not always rest here, but sometimes descends to a loathsome *Offspring*, and corrupts the very *Innocence* of *Childhood*: It intails such *Sickness* and *Diseases* upon *Posterity*, as make them wish themselves unborn, or that they had been stifled at the *Birth*. So desirable a *Blessing* is this which the vicious *Parent* propagates to the *Son*.

Wantonness emasculates the Age.

And certainly if this Lustful *Fire* be not *quench'd*, or else be timely not *restrain'd*, 'twill soon *emasculate* the *Age*, consume the *Strength*, and melt down the *Courage* of the Nation. 'Twill serve instead of a Thousand *Enemies* to foil and overthrow the *Kingdom*, when it has brought our Men to be as Lascivious as *Satyrs*, and as Impotent as *Pygmies*. A *French* Army will not be half so *Formidable* as some Hundreds of *English Messalina's*, who will top upon the greatest *Gallantry*, and sink the

Braveness

Braveneſs of our Spirits more than all their *Legions* and *Battalions*. If we deſign to maintain our Martial *Valour*, for which we are now renown'd through the World, we muſt keep at a Diſtance from *Venus* Tents. An Effeminate *Hero* reſembles a Ball of Wildfire, expiring in the Air without any Reſiſtance or Execution: He is truly qualified for Gallant *Atchievements*; but thoſe tender *Indearments* he meets with in the *Fair Sex* exhauſt all his *Fire* and *Strength*, and render him very inſignificant and uſeleſs.

'Twas a moſt excellent Obſervation of *Juvenal*, concerning the Ruin and Declination of Ancient *Rome*,

------*Sævior Armis*
Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciſcitur orbem.

When the vanquiſh'd *World* had nothing left to revenge it ſelf on conquering *Rome*, its own *Luxury* became its *Overthrow*, and was more *victorious* over it ſelf, than any *Foreign Power* or *Arms*. And while *Effeminacy* triumphs among our Men of *Arms*, *England's Lawrels* of neceſſity muſt *wither*. The Anci-

ent *Gauls* recommended *Continency* till a full and vigorous Age to all their Men design'd for *War*, because they observ'd that *Women* were apt to abate and divert their *Courage*. And the *Greek* History observes to us, That all such as design'd for *Victory* in the *Olympic* Games, took care not to *converse* for some time before with any *Women*.

Children partake of the unruly Passions of their Parents.

But this *Vice* not only dissolves the *Courage* and emasculates the *Spirits*, but it entails upon the *Issue* generally very wild and extravagant *Passions*. And the *Lust* and *Lasciviousness* of the *Parent* runs frequently in the *Child's Veins*; 'tis rooted in the *Constitution*, and mixt with the very *Spirits* and *Blood*. And therefore 'tis the Wisdom of all Persons in their *Conjugal Elections*, to see that those they chuse be of a *well-descended* Nature; that they may be able to pronounce that of themselves, which the Great *Alexander* did, That *his Virtues he had by Nature, but his Vices came by Chance.*

Adulterous Conversation destroys the Offspring.

And since most Men marry with a Design of securing to themselves an *Issue*, as well as *pleasing* of themselves, both these good *Ends* by an inordinate *Lust* are quite *defeated*: For this

this by a Natural *Cauſe* prevents *Conception*, and by conſequence muſt ſtifle all Hopes of *Children* in the Womb. The beaten Paths are always barren, and never productive of any Fruit. This *common way* of living would be apt to put an *End* to the Nobleſt *Family*, though even the Houſe of *Auſtria* depended on it. And indeed, whatever ſprings from an *Adulterous Bed* is rarely of a long *Continuance*. Of That we may affirm what the Poet does of unjuſtly-acquir'd *Riches*, *Ex male quæſitis*, &c. *Ill-gotten Children*, as well as *Wealth*, ſeldom continue to the Third *Generation*. And thus the Two Principal *Ends* of *Matrimony* are utterly baffled and confuted, by frequent Matrimonial *Lewdneſs*, and *Adulterous Converſation*, which both confound the Nuptial *Joys* and *Satisfaction*, and extinguiſh alſo *Lineal Deſcents*, in putting an invincible *Non Ultra* upon the *Progeny* of the *Meaneſt*, as well as the moſt *Ancient* Houſe.

Civil Miſchiefs of this Sin.

The next great *Evil* which attends *Conjugal Licentiouſneſs* and *Impurity*, is the Plague of *Jealouſy*; a Paſſion which blows hot and cold at once: 'Tis a kind of Compound of *Light* and *Darkneſs*, of *Pain* and *Pleaſure*; that con-

It creates Jealouſy.

ſtrains a man to *Hate* and *Abominate* That which he mightily inclines to *Admire* and *Love*. 'Tis of ſuch an *Aguiſh Diſpoſition*, that while it pretends to *warm* the Spirit with *Kindneſs* and *Affection*, it *freezes* it again with *Coldneſs* and *Neglect*. It puts a man into ſuch a tremulous Condition and *Suſpenſe*, that he can neither freely *embrace* his Wife, nor yet think of *parting* with her freely, but it bandies his Mind continually to and fro, in a Sea of *Inconſtancy* and *Heſitation*. And what is more intolerable, than to be *wounded* in the moſt *tender part* ; than for the *Delight* of the *Eyes* to be made the *Grief* of the *Heart*, and to live confin'd continually to *Diſquietude* and *Vexation*? And certainly, except that ſome *Reſtraint* could be put upon the too juſt Cauſe of this tormenting *Paſſion*, it ſeems better much that ſeveral Perſons ſhould anſwer as *Thales* did his Mother concerning *Marriage*, who told her, *When he was Young, it was too ſoon to marry* ; *when he was Old, it was too late. Lepidus*, we are aſſur'd, *expir'd* with *Grief*, becauſe of the *Incontinency* of his *Wife* : I heartily wiſh that he were the only *Martyr* of this kind of *Diſcontent*, and the laſt that fell a

Victim

Victim to this ſort of *Diſſatisfaction*; which is a *Torment* ſo intolerable, that the very *Animals* are impatient under this *Preſſure*, and enrag'd to be rival'd in their *Amours*. And there is nothing certainly that ferments the Mind to a greater pitch of *Anger* and *Reſentment*, than thoſe vexatious *Thoughts* inſpir'd by *Jealouſy*.

Waſtes the Eſtate.

But it is not enough for thoſe that are married thus, to conſume the *Eyes*, and waſte the *Souls* of ſuch as are injur'd, with Diſcontent; but they likewiſe quarry very often upon the *Fortune*, and maintain their Conſumptive Luſts at a large *Expence*. What *Care* and *Frugality* had for a long time hoarded up, that *Prodigality* in a very ſhort time makes a ſhift to laviſh away: What was *laboriouſly* collected in the *Day-time*, is often either by the one or the other as *idly* waſted and expended at *Night*; till the *Neſts* of the *Miſtreſſes* and *Gallants* are richly feather'd with their *Subſtance*. And in this they too nearly moralize the *Fable* of the *Danaides*, condemning themſelves to put their *Money* in a Bag with *Holes*; as thoſe Daughters of *Danaus* were puniſh'd in *Hell* with filling Water in a Tub without a Bottom. Of this we have a late

late memorable Inſtance among our *Nobility* here at Home, beſides many more leſs-Illuſtrious Examples which might be produc'd: For *within Three Years which happen'd between the late Duke's* (Norfolk's) *Death, and the parting the new Duke and Dutcheſs, ſhe run him out by Extravagant Expences* 30000 l. *above his Income; to pay which, oblig'd him to ſell his Life,* 2400 l. per Ann. *out of his Eſtate in* Suſſex *and* Yorkſhire. [*See the Duke of* Norfolk's *Caſe.*] This is one main *Reaſon* among the reſt, that men in this diſcreet Age, as they call it, keep at ſo great a *Diſtance* from the Ties of *Wedlock*, that with the *Eſſenians* they will rather chuſe to extinguiſh the Succeſſion of Men, than beget them in a *Married State*; or if they do, 'tis rather for the Love of *Wealth* than of the *Woman*, and ſo make a *Marriage* of *Bodies* without *Souls.* And when they are tied together thus very *looſely*, and the Married Pair, as to any Cordial *Love* and *Affection*, continue ſtill in a *Single State*, what tolerable degrees of *Indearments* and *Friendſhip* can poſſibly be expected from them; ſince they vow'd that with their *Mouth* which their *Mind* diſown'd, and tied that with the *Tongue*,

Tongue, which they never conſented to with the *Heart*? From whence proceed thoſe Rumours daily of ſo many *Skirmiſhes* and Domeſtick *Diſcords*, of ſuch *Broils* and *Diſſentions* in ſeveral *Families*, which are perfect *Epitomies* of a *Civil War*, and nothing but *Nurſeries* of *Feuds* and *Diſcontent*; which render a *Wilderneſs* more deſirable than a *Palace*, and a Bed of *Ruſhes* more eaſy than a Bed of *Down*. And while theſe are the *Effects* of *Matrimonial Engagements*, and the wretched *Conſequence* and horrid *Reſult* of thoſe Sacred Vows, no wonder that the *Poet's* Choice ſhould be the general *Motto* of this looſe Age, *Gall. Ele.* 1.

Raiſes Domeſtick Broils and Troubles.

Inclines men to Celibacy.

Et mihi dulce magis reſoluto vivere collo.

Nothing agrees more with my Mind,
Than Liberty that's unconfin'd.

But that which highly aggravates this *Crime*, and renders it far more unpardonable in the *Married* Perſons, is, that they are under a moſt ſolemn *Contract*, and indiſſoluble *Obligation* to the contrary; and yet they venture without

without *Reſtraint*, and reſolutely *break* all thoſe holy *Bonds* aſunder. So that what is remark'd of the happy *Situation* of our *Iſland*, That in reſpect of *Commerce* it enjoys this extraordinary Advantage of lying *open* to all the Parts of the *World*, may with *Shame* and *Confuſion* be pronounc'd of the unhappy *Temper* of our looſe *Gallants*, who expoſe themſelves ſo commonly to all Strangers, and drive ſo general a Traffick with all kind of People: For Confirmation of which, though we cannot juſtly pronounce it to be true in all Caſes, we need but obſerve the ſtrange Diverſity of *Children* that are often ſeen in one and the ſame *Houſe*, and are thought all to belong to the ſame *Parents*. This *Child* is naturally as *Fair* as that Lady whom *Horace* deſcribes to be endow'd with a *vultus nimium lubricus aſpici*: That other is a perfect *Dowdy*, and as Black as any *Spaniard*. Here you may ſee one *Plump*, and ſhap'd like a *Dutch Skipper*: There another *Tall*, and *Slender-waſted*, like the *Monument*. One is *Sanguine*, another is *Pale*: Here's a *Dwarf*, and there's a *Giant*: This is *Surly*, and that is nothing but *Complaiſance*. They are all as *like* one another,

as

as a *Peaſant* is a *Lord*; and as *like* the *Father*, as a rough *Tartar* is a ſmooth *Italian*: So that if you conſider the *Children* all diſtinctly, you would really fancy that half *Europe* had clubb'd to make up one *Family*. But herein Charity adviſes us not to paſs our Judgments raſhly; becauſe ſuch Diverſities may ſometimes proceed from Legitimate Congreſs. And this unlawful *Freedom* not only *corrupts* the *Strain*, and allays the *Lineal* current *Deſcent* with ſpurious *Mixture* and a baſe *Breed*, but derives likewiſe a laſting Mark of *Infamy* upon the *Children*, ſtigmatizes their *Character*, and libels their *Repute* and *Credit* in the World. Now if Men are ſo careful of preſerving the *Breed* of their *Beaſts* pure, eſpecially ſuch as are remarkable for any *Excellence*, that they will not endure a *Mixture* from any of a *different kind*, for fear of altering of the *Strength* or *Shape*, or abating of ſome good and eminent *Quality*; ſhould not then as tender a *Regard* be had for *Families*, for ſecuring them from being *adulterated* and *ſtain'd* with *Falſe Amours*, and *Illegitimate Conceptions*, and being made a *Medley* of contrary Humours, and diſagreeable *Genius's* and *Diſpoſitions*? And no *Parent*

Conjugal Immodeſty ignominious to the Family.

that had the leaſt *Reſpect* either for the *Honour* of the *Family*, or the *Comfort* and *Reputation* of the *Children*, but would chuſe rather a thouſand times to dye *Childleſs*, than have them brought into the World with ſuch a Train of *Miſeries* attending them.

It deprives the next Heir of his Right.

We may add to this the hainous *Injuſtice* which is done to the next *Heir*, of cutting him out of all his *Pretenſions*, and *robbing* him of all thoſe *Privileges* and *Profits*, to which he had an undeniable *Claim*: Whereby a *Nobleman* of the beſt Family may be ſupplanted by an obſcure Perſon of the *meaneſt*, if the Woman prove unchaſte and falſe, for want of *Iſſue* from the *Marriage-Bed*. And this I am afraid is none of the leaſt Reaſons of the apparent *Degeneracy* of ſome *Ancient Families* in the Nation. 'Tis true indeed, the *Men* in theſe Caſes are no more excuſable than the *Women*, they are equally as guilty of *Matrimonial Inconſtancy* as their *Wives*; but then the *Husband* cannot bring in an *Illegitimate Child* into the Family; he cannot by that means ſtrike out the next *Lawful Heir*, and baſely *deprive* him of his *Birthright*. This is wholly owing to the unlawful Familiarity of *Wives*, and

and is an *Evil* in them of the firſt *Magnitude*, being compounded both of abominable *Treachery* and *Injuſtice*. And therefore to preſerve the *Succeſſion* in a right Line, that no baſe *Child* may deprive the Lawful *Heir* of his juſt *Privileges*, 'tis an Ancient Cuſtom in ſeveral Places of the *Eaſt*, as well as in *Africk*, That the *Heirſhip* of Families runs all along on the *Mother's* ſide, as being leaſt liable to *Sophiſtry* and *Impoſition*. So that if once the *Nativity* be allow'd, the proper *Father* is never queſtion'd. In *Rome*, formerly, Three of *Lepidus's Relations* were born with a *Cartilage* upon the Right Eye, as a diſtinctive *Mark* of that *Family* to which they belong'd. And were all the *Families* in *England* to be trac'd at the ſame rate, and every *Child* in the Nation affix'd to its Genuine *Father*, what a Numerous *Brood* would be found in ſome *Houſes*, that are now *deſtitute* of *Children?* And how many Perſons that *feed* and *educate* Variety of *Children*, as their own, would then be really left almoſt *Childleſs?*

Beſides theſe odious *Civil* Conſequences, there are Abundance of *Religious* Evils which this Conjugal *Libertiniſm* produces, which was *Religious Miſchiefs.*

Adultery capital among the Jews.

a Vice ſo deteſtable among the *Jews*, that *Death* is pronounc'd the infallible *Penalty* of it, Deut. xx. 10. *And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that commits adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and adultereſs ſhall ſurely be put to death.* And were this *Law* in *England* as frequently *executed* as it is *tranſgreſs'd*, it would in ſome meaſure *unpeople* us, I am afraid, as much as either the laſt *Plague*, or the late *War* has done, and mightily increaſe the Accounts of *Mortality* among us. And that this is a *Vice* of that *intoxicating Nature*, that men are but rarely drawn off from it, we have *Solomon's* Teſtimony, *Prov.* ii. 19. *None that go in unto her* (the Lewd Woman) *return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.* Chap. vii. 27. *Her houſe is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.* No *Dungeon* is half ſo *dangerous* and *diſmal* as her *Apartments*, notwithſtanding all their ſplendid *Gaiety*. And that Wiſe *King*, who ſmarted ſo ſeverely under their *Enchantments*, becauſe he was too *familiar* with their ways, has with as much *Freedom* as *Severity* kindly given Caution againſt too much *Confidence* in them, in that *Sentence* of

of his, which looks as ſharp as any *Satyr* that was written againſt them, *Eccleſ.* vii. 28. *One man among a thouſand have I found, but a woman among all thoſe have I not found.* No, not even among the *Seven Hundred Wives* that were *Princeſſes*, and thoſe *Three Hundred Concubines* which he choſe to compleat his *Thouſand.* But this can be no juſt *Reflection* upon the Innocent *Converſation* of our *Ladies*; among whom I queſtion not but there are now ſeveral of as rigid *Continence* and *Virtue*, as there were in any *Age* ſince his Time.

'Twas in the late *Reigns* that this Abominable *Iniquity* came to be ſo Epidemic an *Engliſh* Vice. The People of *Iſrael* follow'd the Sins of *Jeroboam*; and *Regis ad exemplum*, &c. were the *Sins* of [redacted]. who made *England* to ſin. And unleſs the *Great Council of the Nation* ſhall think fit to do ſomething as remarkable for the *Suppreſſion* of that Abomination, as has been done for the *Encouragement of it*, we muſt ſtill ſtand in *Fear* of its ominous *Growth*, and juſtly dread the *fatal Conſequences* of its *Increaſe* among us. That it will, if not reſtrain'd, produce at length a Storm of very heavy *Judgments* upon us, we may verily believe,

Addreſs to the Parliament.

lieve, from that ſevere *Indignation* which the *Almighty* has frequently expreſs'd againſt this *Wickedneſs*; and that not only in threatning with *future*, but inflicting *preſent* Plagues. He ſtiles himſelf *ſlow to Anger*, and is unapt to ſhow his Reſentments on a *ſudden*; but yet at *length* he ſtrikes home; as the *Poet* tells us,

It provokes the Judgments of God.

Ὀψὲ θεῶν ἀλέουσι μύλαι, ἀλέουσι δὲ λεπτά.

Mills of the Gods do ſlowly wind,
But they at length to Powder grind.

And therefore *Job* comforts himſelf with the Remembrance of his *Innocence* and *Integrity*, and the *Aſſurance* he had of not ſmarting for this Sin, which he reckons to be extremely pernicious and deſtructive: *Job* xxxi. 9, 10, 11, 12. *If my heart has been deceiv'd by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be puniſh'd by the judges: For it is a fire that conſumeth to deſtruction, and would root out all my Increaſe.* He thought

thought it ſo far from *adding* any thing to his *Family*, that it would certainly *exterminate* and *extinguiſh* thoſe *Bleſſings* whereof he had been already poſſeſs'd; and that it would *diminiſh* his *Comforts* inſtead of making an *Increaſe* to them. And doubtleſs whatever *Felicities* any Perſons can pretend to from ſuch filthy unlawful *Practices*, the *Miſeries* will in all reſpects far *over-balance* and *outweigh* them, and produce a Train of *laſting* and very *grievous Evils*, for thoſe *ſhort* and *vaniſhing Delights*. And many *Nations* beſides the *Jews* have been poſſeſs'd with ſo irreconcilable an *Odium* and utter *Deteſtation* againſt all *Adulterous Converſation*, that they doom'd the Commiſſion of it to as *Capital* a Puniſhment as the *Jews* did, and ſentenc'd the Guilty Perſons unto *Death*.

At *Pulo*, *Condore*, and *Pegu*; at *Siam*, *Cochinchina*, *Cambodia*, and *Guinea*, the Natives are ſo obliging to *Strangers*, as to offer them the Uſe of *Women*, though not of their *Wives*. And yet what *Heathens* diſavow'd, is very ſhamefully practis'd by *Chriſtians*; and what the *Husband* is utterly averſe to, That the *Wife* chuſes, againſt all the *Laws* of Matrimonial

nial Endearments, the natural *Violence* of whose *Luſt* breaks too often through all the various and ſtrong *Reſtraints* of *Fear* and *Honour*, which by a Wiſe *Providence* were contriv'd as *Bars* to their *Chaſtity*, and plac'd as *Guardians* to their *Modeſty*.

It was Five hundred and twenty Years after *Rome* was built, before ever that renown'd and flouriſhing *City* heard of a *Divorce* among her People. And when *Spurius Carbilius* diſmiſs'd his Wife upon the account of her *Sterility*, for he had no Argument againſt her of *Matrimonial Impurity*, yet he receiv'd a ſound *Reproof* for that Action; and was told, That the *Deſire of Children* ought to give place to *Conjugal Obligations*: *Val. Max. lib. 2. cap. 1.* 'Tis not either for the *Barrenneſs* of the *Women*, or the Natural *Coldneſs* of the *Men*, that *Divorces* are ſo much requeſted among us, as for their looſe unlawful *Behaviour* to one another. Thoſe Natural unavoidable *Infirmities* do plead for *Excuſe*, and are ſometimes pardon'd where the *Affections* are entire and ardent: But this *Matrimonial Inconſtancy* is a Vice of that *Malignity*, that it *poyſons* the *Kindneſs* of the moſt *Cordial*, and *cools* the moſt

Sanguine

Sanguine Husband or Wife into *Indifference*, and oftentimes *Averſation*.

The *Almighty* was ſo averſe to unlawful *Iſſues* under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation, that he declares, *Deut.* xxiii. 2. *A baſtard ſhall not enter into the congregation of the Lord; even to his tenth generation ſhall he not enter into the congregation of the Lord*: That is, as the *Hebrew* Doctors expound it, *Never*. And the *Reaſon* which they give for it, is this, That Perſons might be deterr'd from ſuch *Marriages* as would leave an indelible Mark of *Infamy* upon Poſterity. And the Wiſe Son of *Syrac* has in few words expreſs'd the ſeveral great *Evils* that attend the *Violation* of *Matrimonial Fidelity*, in the Woman particularly, *Ecclus.* xxiii. 22, *&c. Thus ſhall it go alſo with the wife that leaves her husband, and brings in an heir by another. For Firſt, She has diſobey'd the law of the moſt High. And Secondly, She has treſpaſs'd againſt her own husband. And Thirdly, She has play'd the whore in adultery, and brought children by another man. She ſhall be brought out into the congregation, and inquiſition ſhall be made of her children. Her children ſhall not take root, and her branches ſhall bring forth no fruit. She ſhall leave*

her memory to be curs'd, and her reproach ſhall not be blotted out. And they that remain ſhall know, that there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord, and that there is nothing ſweeter than to take heed to the commandments of the Lord.

Now ſince the *Zeal* and *Conduct* of the *High Court of Parliament* have done ſuch *Miracles* for the *Safety* of the Nation, have conquer'd *Difficulties* that ſeem'd *inſuperable* in Time of *War*, and have ſince appeas'd all the *Publick Clamours* of *Diſcontent* in time of *Peace*; ſurely it would not be a *Matter* unworthy their *Thoughts* and *Conſideration*, to reflect upon the Numerous *Miſchiefs* which this too common *Conjugal Inconſtancy* produces; and preſcribe ſuch *Antidotes* as might timely put a ſtop to it. What a *Glory* will this add to all thoſe Mighty Things which they have already done? And how many Thouſand *Families* in *England* will think themſelves obliged to call them for ever *bleſſed* for it? And *bleſſed* they muſt needs be, who make their *Authority* a *Terror* to all *Iniquity*, and take care that *Vice* ſhould never trample upon their *Power*, nor a *Wickedneſs* ſo *daring*, ſo *miſchievous*,

vous, and *odious* as this, ſhould ever paſs any longer without a due *Cenſure*, and juſt *Puniſhment*. Were this *Effeminate Liberty* but effectually *ſuppreſs'd* by their Wiſe *Determinations*, what a lovely *Alteration* would it produce throughout the whole *Kingdom*! And how many *Injur'd* Perſons, whoſe *Tempers* are now dejected with private *Grief* and *Diſcontent*, would then have them turn'd immediately into a pleaſant *Chearfulneſs* and *Satisfaction*? Our *Men* would then be more *Hale* and *Vigorous*, more *Active* and *Hardy* than now they are, and not be *enervated* with *Effeminacy*, and *ſubdued* with ſharp Pains and Diſeaſes of *Luſt*; nor yet be *rack'd* with violent and impetuous *Paſſions* deriv'd from the deprav'd *Appetite* of the *Parent*. How many *Eſtates* might then be *ſav'd*, that now are *waſted* and *conſum'd* by Prodigal Expenſive *Lewdneſs*? And how many *Families* live like *Brethren* in *Love* and *Amity*, that are now only the *Nurſeries* of *Jealouſy* and *Diſcontent*?

And were theſe formidable *Difficulties* of *Marriage* but remov'd, and the *Wife* ſafe in the *Love* of her *Husband*, and *He* in the *Affections* of his *Wife*, and the *Legitimacy* of her

Offspring, and not expos'd ſo deſperately to the *Falſity* of her Love, and the *Unlawfulneſs* of her Progeny, the *Taxes* then that are laid upon *Batchelors* would ſenſibly *decay* and *vaniſh*, and thoſe upon *Marriage* as apparently *increaſe* and *multiply*. Men then would entertain the Thoughts of *Wedlock* with the ſame Honourable *Eſteem* as that Solemnity gain'd at its *firſt Inſtitution*; which would no more be look'd upon as a State of *Slavery*, but *Freedom*; as fit for Man even in his State of *Innocence* and *Perfection*; and a *Bleſſing* deſign'd to *inhance* the *Pleaſure*, and *multiply* all the *Comforts* and *Delights* of Life. But ſuch a happy *Change* as this can never in *England* be expected, till thoſe Wiſe Reſolutions which inſpir'd the *Auguſt Aſſembly of the Nation* to ſurmount ſuch *Hardſhips* as ſeem'd *unconquerable*, animate them again to eſtabliſh ſuch an *Act* againſt this diſſolute Matrimonial *Behaviour*, as may *reſtrain* the Married Perſons within Bounds of *Modeſty*; which is the only means of promoting that Honourable *Eſtate*, which is now ſo wretchedly *neglected*; and of *reviving* its decay'd *Felicities* and *Comforts*. For now the *Impunity* of it has encourag'd its *Violation*

lation to that degree of *Aſſurance* and *Boldneſs*, as if the *Offenders* were really *Lawleſs*, and *outbrav'd* the *Force* of *Civil Conſtitutions*, and the *Power* of the *Legiſlature* to reſtrain them. For effecting which, it might not be amiſs to contrive ſuch a *Method* and *Law*, as might render *Divorces* leſs *chargeable* and *difficult* than now they are. For ſince all *Divorces*, with the Liberty of *Marrying* again, proceed from the *Authority* of *Parliament*; therefore if either there chance to be no *Seſſions* for ſome time; or if there be, the *Parliament* has no *Opportunity* of diſpatching ſuch *private Concerns*; or if the Perſon *injur'd* be a Man of no *Application*, or be deſtitute either of *Money* or of *Time* to go through with ſuch a weighty *Affair*; in all theſe Inſtances he muſt be forc'd to *Silence*, and privately to ſtruggle with his inward *Burthen* and his *Grief*, becauſe he is not qualified for a *Deliverance* from the *Difficulties* of them. And therefore ſince our *Saviour* aſſures us, and the moſt Judicious *Caſuiſts* atteſt, That upon the account of *Fornication* it is really lawful both to *divorce*, and to *marry again*, Matth. 5. 32. why ſhould not ſome more *Eaſy Method* be thought of, than now is *practis'd*, for

The Impudence of Offenders.

Divorces lawful upon the account of Fornication.

relieving

relieving the Party *injur'd* and *oppreſs'd*? For ſometimes *Divorces* have taken up the ſpace of *Four Years* before they were accompliſh'd; as that of the Lord *Roſs*, which continued from 66 to 70. and that of the Duke of *Norfolk*'s much longer. And certainly 'twere more deſirable, that the ſpeedy *Diſpatch* of the *Jewiſh* manner of *Divorce*, *Be expelled from me, and free for any body elſe*; upon juſt *Conviction*, were *allow'd*, than ſuch as are ſo *Tedious* and *Expenſive* as thoſe now mention'd.

Concluſion. Since therefore the happy *Conſtitution* of our *Government* takes care of all other *Properties*, it will not, I hope, hereafter ſuffer this which is moſt *dear* and *tender*, to be ſo eaſily *invaded* and *raviſh'd* from us. Nor will thoſe *Laws* which are a *Defence* for an *Ox* or an *Aſs*, overlook the *Security* of the moſt Valuable *Enjoyment*, neglect the *Rights* and *Intereſts* of the *Conjugal Bed*, and not maintain the *Staple Comfort* of our *Lives* in all the *Duties* and *Obligations* of *Matrimonial Conſtancy* and *Indearments*.

FINIS.